

Get Started Transcribing

Register

Citizen Archivists must register for a free user account in order to contribute to the [National Archives Catalog](#), by clicking on the *Log in / Sign Up* button. We encourage you to read our Citizen Contribution Policy.

The National Archives Catalog uses [Login.gov](#) to allow you to securely register and sign in to your user account safely and securely. Learn more about Login.gov in our [Help Center](#).

Login

Once you have a National Archives Catalog Account, you will need to login to your account to begin contributing. Click on the *Log in / Sign Up* button to Log in.

Need help with your Catalog user account? Please visit the Catalog Account section - [Using the National Archives Catalog](#).

Find Records to Transcribe


For suggestions of records to transcribe, browse our webpage of [curated missions](#) organized by topic. Click on a topic that interests you, and it will take you directly to a list of those records in the National Archives Catalog.

Citizen Archivist Missions




New to our Citizen Archivist program? Learn how to [get started](#).

We've curated these missions to help you jump in and contribute! Click on a topic that interests you, and it will bring you right to those records in our Catalog where you can begin transcribing or tagging. New missions are added and updated regularly, so check back often to see what's new.




Interrogation Reports

Transcribe the official reports of the interrogations that were taken from the survivors of the captured or sunk German u-boats and raiders.



Correspondence Relating to Reindeer Meat

Transcribe correspondence regarding sales and transportation of reindeer meat; hides; costs; and supplies.



Panama Canal

Transcribe these newly declassified records relating to the Panama Canal. Records give insight and perspective into treaty negotiations and interactions between the American Embassy and U.S. government agencies on the Canal.

At the bottom of the missions page, you will also see a list of featured records. Click on "Transcribe this record" to go directly to that record in the Catalog where you can begin transcribing.

Featured Records

Helps us transcribe these individual records:

- Letter from Special Assistant U.S. Attorney to the Attorney General, 6/15/1917 [Transcribe this record.](#)
- Doc. No. 275d: Letter from Lyndon B. Johnson, Senate Leader to Ellsworth Bunker, President of the American Red Cross, 1/18/1955 [Transcribe this record.](#)
- H. R. 14359, 72nd Congress, 2nd Session, 2/28/1933 [Transcribe this record.](#)
- Letter From L. N. Odell to Mr. Reynolds Regarding Prices, 8/20/1907 [Transcribe this record.](#)
- 228-07 Operation Jingle Bells - 1971 [Transcribe this record.](#)
- Message from the President of the United States Vetoing H.R. 12445, 7/11/1932 [Transcribe this record.](#)
- Report of a survey for a military wagon road between Valdez and Eagle, Alaska. [Transcribe this record.](#)
- Yeltsin, 9/94 - VP Toast [Transcribe this record.](#)
- Informal Extemporaneous Remarks of the President before the Daughters of the American Revolution, 4/21/1938 [Transcribe this record.](#)
- Information in Case # 2692 [Transcribe this record.](#)
- Intercepted Diplomatic Messages Sent by the Japanese Government Between July 1 and December 8, 1941 [Transcribe this record.](#)

Step-by-Step

The following instructions detail the process of transcribing records in the National Archives Catalog.

Once you find a record in the Catalog that you wish to transcribe, click on the title of the item to bring up the full record and description.

The screenshot shows the National Archives Catalog interface. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation links for "Advanced" and "Help". Below the search bar, there are links for "Export", "Share...", and "Options...". The main content area displays search results for the tag "cebrfal-ts1". On the left, there are filters for "Filter by:" (Tag: cebrfal-ts1), "All records", "Available to access online (83)", "Type of Materials" (Textual Records (83)), "Part of Record Groups", "Level of Description" (Item (83)), and "Data Source" (Description (83)). The search results are sorted by "Most Relevant" and show 1 of 5 pages. The first record is titled "Contract to Employ Thomas P. Waring as a Dispensing Clerk at the Dispensary, Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, Camden, Arkansas, February 1, 1868". A red arrow points to this title. Below the title, there is a thumbnail image of a document and metadata including NAID: 86455410, Creator: War Department. The Adjutant General's Office. 1821-4/28/1904, Record Group 94: Records of the Adjutant General's Office, and Series: Contracts of Employees With the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands.

This particular record contains multiple pages. Thumbnail images of all the record's pages are shown to the right of the main image viewer. Next to the word transcription it says not started. This means the page is not yet transcribed. Click on any thumbnail to

see the transcription status. Then click on the thumbnail of the page you would like to transcribe; typically this would be the first available page.

Contract to Employ Anthony Woodworth as an Ambulance Driver, Freedmen's Hospital, Atlanta, Georgia, May 5, 1868

NAID: 86455478 | Textual Records | 2 Images | 1 File

+

Transcription Available

Tags 7

Comments 0

+ Show Details

1

2

PDF 3

Click on *Transcription* to open the transcription panel.

Item

Contract to Employ Thomas P. Waring as a Dispensing Clerk at the Dispensary, Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, Camden, Arkansas, February 1, 1868

NAID: 86455410 | Textual Records | 2 Images | 1 File

+

Transcription Not Started

Tags 0

Comments 0

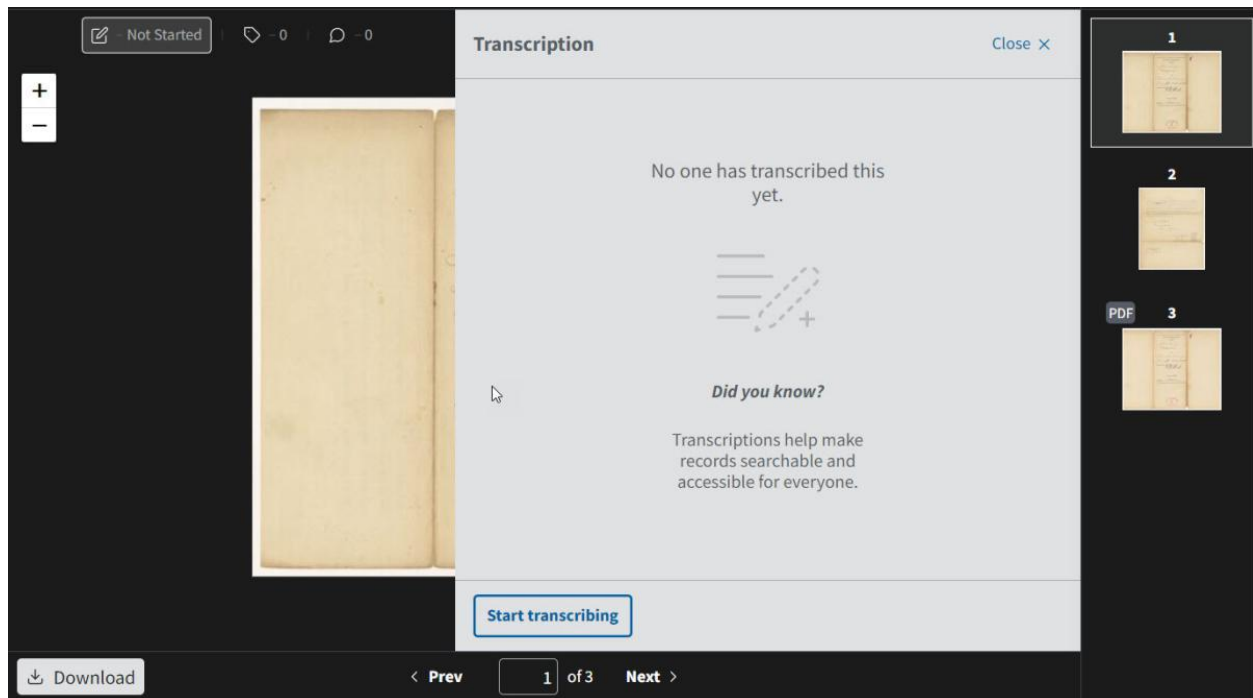
+ Show Details

1

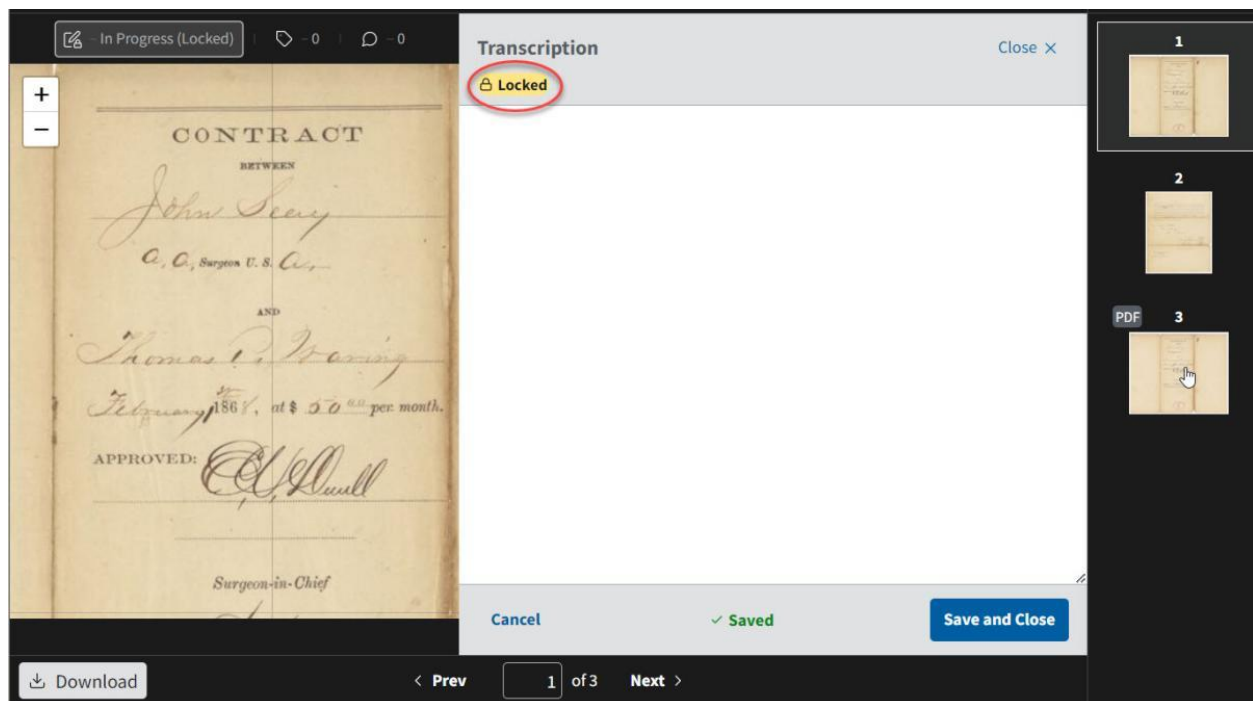
2

PDF 3

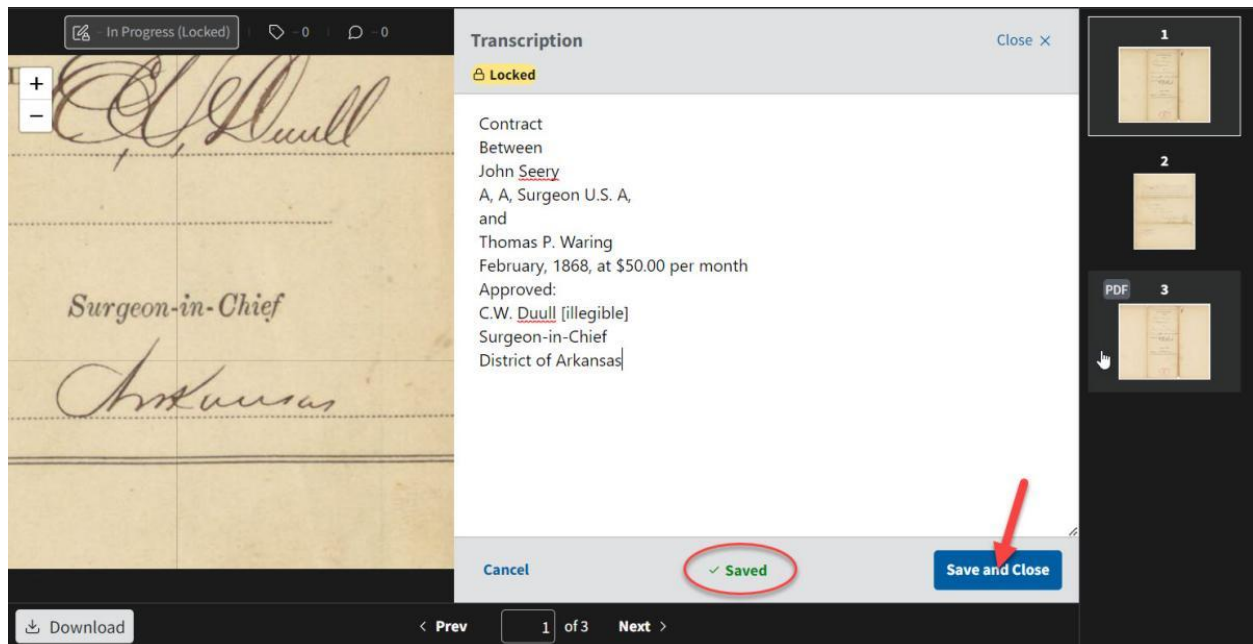
Adjust the record so that you can view the text. Use the + and - buttons on the top left to adjust the size of the image. Click *Start Transcribing* in the gray transcription panel.



The transcription panel has now turned white and is ready for you to begin. You will also see Locked highlighted in yellow [circled in red here to show the location]. This means the page is locked for your exclusive use and another Citizen Archivist can not transcribe the page while you are using it.

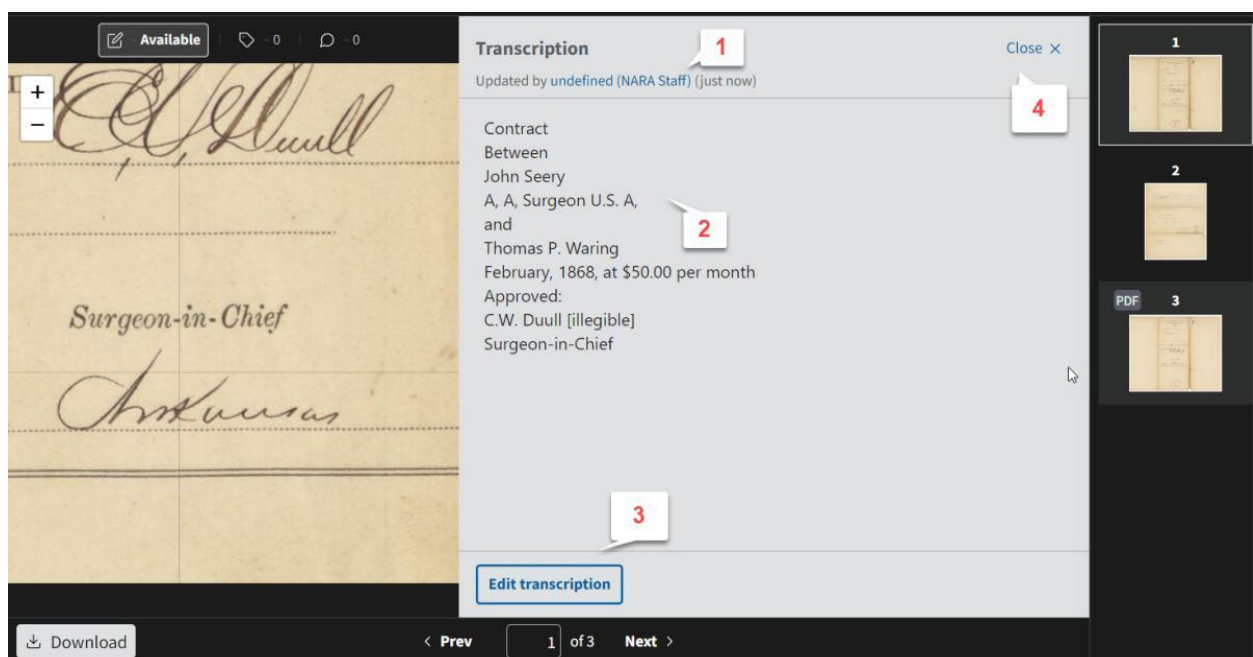


As you transcribe, your work is automatically saved. You can see Saved in green at the bottom of the panel. When you complete your work or you are ready to stop, click *Save and Close*.



Now you can see the work you have completed. Let's look at the features of this page.

1. The Locked text has been removed and now you can see your username and when you saved/updated the page.
2. You can review your transcription.
3. If you see an edit that needs to be made, click *Edit transcription* to edit the page again.
4. If you are satisfied with your transcription, *Close* the panel.

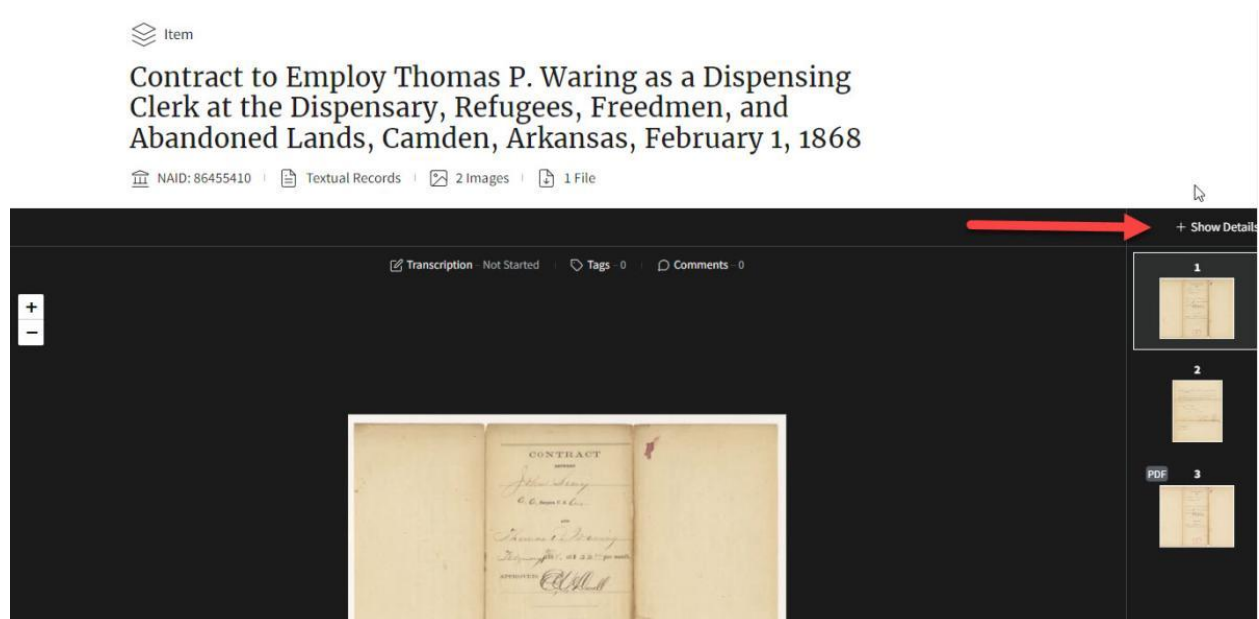


If you would like to transcribe another page, click on any of the additional thumbnails located to the right of the main image viewer, or use the “*Prev*” or “*Next*” buttons below the image viewer to navigate through the pages. Review the transcription status for the page and repeat the steps above to transcribe.

How to find a page to transcribe

In some cases, especially for records that are part of Citizen Archivist missions, you may have to look to find a page that has not been transcribed. You should now look at the thumbnails to see what pages you can transcribe.

Click on *Show Details* to see which pages have transcriptions:



Item

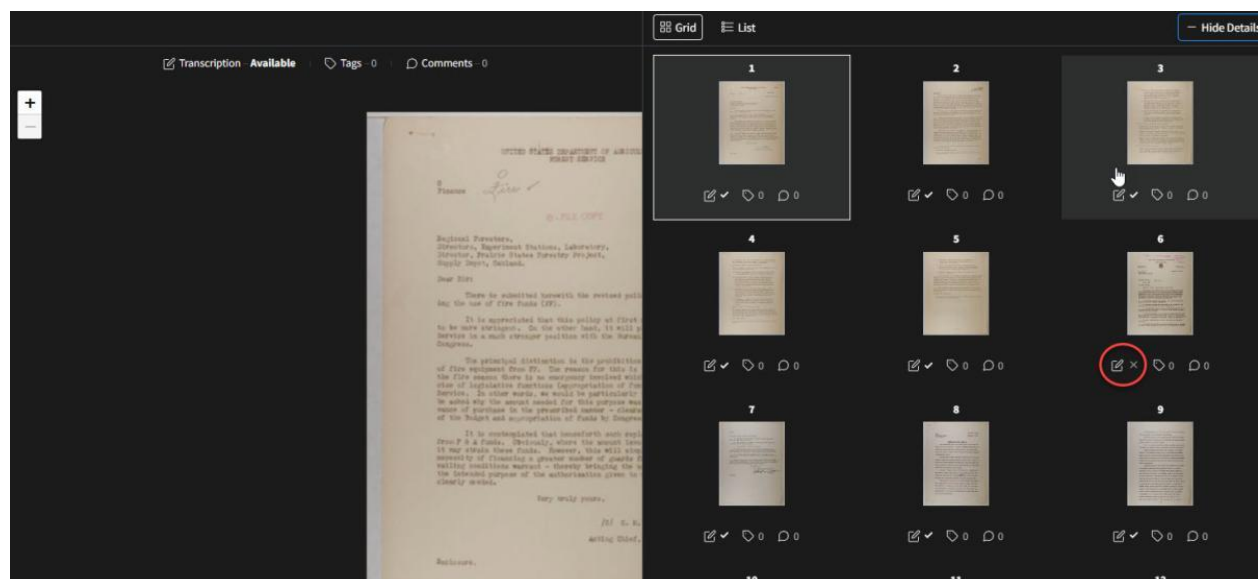
Contract to Employ Thomas P. Waring as a Dispensing Clerk at the Dispensary, Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, Camden, Arkansas, February 1, 1868

NAID: 86455410 | Textual Records | 2 Images | 1 File

Transcription: Not Started | Tags: 0 | Comments: 0

+ Show Details

In the *Grid* layout, look for the X which represents no transcription. Click on the transcription icon to begin transcribing that particular page.



Grid | List | Hide Details

Transcription: Available | Tags: 0 | Comments: 0

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

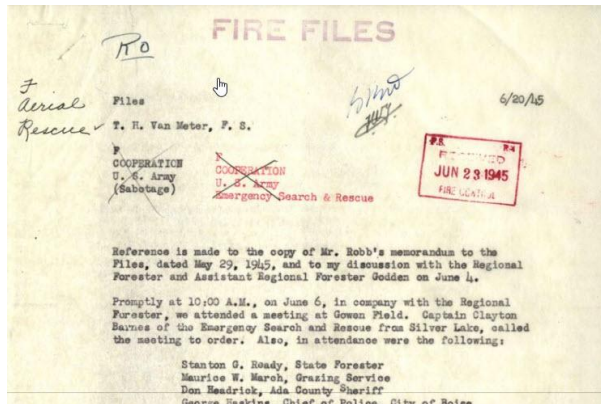
In the *List* layout, look for Not Started. Click on Not Started to begin transcribing that particular page.

The screenshot displays the Citizen Archivist interface. On the left, a document preview is shown with the title "UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY" and the subject "Fire Damage". The document text discusses the fire damage to the Bureau of Plant Industry and the need for fire insurance. On the right, a table lists records in a "List" layout. The table has columns for "Object", "Transcriptions", "Tags", and "Comments". Record 6 is highlighted with a red circle and labeled "Not Started".

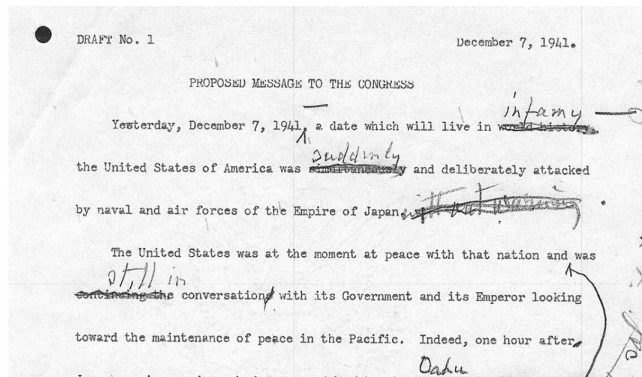
Object	Transcriptions	Tags	Comments
1 (Image)	Available	0	0
2 (Image)	Available	0	0
3 (Image)	Available	0	0
4 (Image)	Available	0	0
5 (Image)	Available	0	0
6 (Image)	Not Started	0	0
7 (Image)	Available	0	0
8 (Image)	Available	0	0
9 (Image)	Available	0	0

HINT: If you are still struggling to find a record with pages to transcribe in a Citizen Archivist mission - skip to the middle or the end of a list of records in a mission, often they have not yet been transcribed or tagged.


Transcription Tips



All documents are unique and may contain various aspects such as stamps, tables, or charts. Type what you see and follow the order and layout as best you can. Type words exactly as they are written in the document. This includes capitalization, abbreviations, names, dates, and even misspelled words. Don't worry about matching the format and spacing (the words are the most important part!)



You may include [crossed out] next to crossed out text to indicate its format, as it may provide information useful to the document.

you.
 Eugene and I appreciate
 more than we can
 ever tell you, your
 being so wonderful
 to us.
 With much love
 Helen B South
 Monday - 


Compare similar letters in the document to help confirm that you are reading the text correctly. Letters will often appear similar or standard throughout a handwritten document by the same scribe. If you can't make out a word, use [illegible]. If you'd like to make a notation about something you see in the record, do so in brackets. For example: [stamp in blue ink]. Do your best and use your best judgment.

Mr. Chairman, my friends in Sioux City, my friends in this great State, and, indeed, all of you through the country who are listening on the radio tonight, let me tell you first of all that I appreciate this remarkable welcome that you have given me, and I appreciate, too, the performance put on by the mounted patrol of my fellow Shriners.

Two weeks ago, when I was heading toward the Coast, I presented before an audience in the City of Topeka, what I conceived to be the problem of agriculture in these United States, with particular reference to the Middle West and West, and what the government of the nation can do to meet that problem of ours.

I have been highly gratified to receive from all parts

We ask you to type what you see, but you do not have to mimic the exact formatting. In this case you do not need indent each paragraph

AIR MEDAL DECORATION		
	AABYE, THOMAS P.	36737943 Sgt
	GO 482/15th AF/44	
	1st - 752/44	
	2d - 981/44	
	3d - 1285/44	
	III.	

If you want to indicate that a detail is in a different format, you can share this information in brackets. In this case you can add [handwritten] to your transcription.

Dear Sir:

Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of April 1, regarding Mr. Schultz who had charge of the Indians who recently returned from Europe where they appeared with a circus.

In answer you are advised that I do not know the present address of Mr. Schultz. I regret that I am unable to furnish the information requested. Mr. Schultz has wired me he will be here in a month. If I learn of his address, I shall be pleased to notify you.

If a word is hyphenated at the end of a line, you can remove the hyphen. This helps the search engine identify the correct word. In this example per-son would be transcribed as person.

3-1751
Form NR-14
(Nov. 1945)

MIGRATORY BIRDS
(other than waterfowl)
Refuge Natural Natl. Wildlife Refuge
Months of September 1, December 31, 1946

(1) Species Common Name	(2) First Seen		(3) Peak Numbers		(4) Last Seen		(5) Production			(6) Total Estimated Number
	Number	Date	Number	Date	Number	Date	Colonies	Nests	Young	
I. Water and Marsh Birds:										
White Pelican	250	9/15	250	9/15	8	12/28				250
Farallon Cormorant	315				72	12/28				500
Tringa Heron	4	9/20			5	12/28				100
American Egret	24	9/20			10	12/28				200
Brewster's Egret	500	9/20			20	12/28				500
Black-crowned Night Heron					7	12/28				500
II. Shorebirds, Gulls and Terns:										
Killdeer	1	9/20			2	12/28				50
Wilson Snipe					1	12/28				50
Spotted Sandpiper					3	12/28				25

Columns and charts can be difficult to transcribe. We focus on the text rather than the format. We suggest using the symbol | to delineate columns.

White Pelican | 250 | 9/15 |

Find a record with unique or tricky features? Read our [Transcription Tips](#) guide for more examples and best practices for transcribing.

Thank you for your contributions! Every contribution helps make the records of the National Archives more accessible to everyone.

We encourage you to read our [Citizen Contribution Policy](#).

Questions? Contact us at citizenarchivist@nara.gov